Along the Wine Trail

Words of Regret Over the Forthcoming Change in the Liquor Authority of the State.

By G. SELMER FOUGNER.

You cannot judge the liquor from the lees.
—Tennyson.

Perhaps we are all wrong; perhaps our fears are entirely groundless. But to this close follower of developments in the wine and spirits field ever since repeal, the departure of Edward P. Mulrooney from the State Board of Alcohol Control is the worst blow suffered by the industry as a whole since the date of its rebirth, December 5, 1933.

Full well do we know that some members of the industry will applaud the change. And it might well be that Mr. Mulrooney himself will appreciate not at all our expression of regret at his departure, for no one realizes better than we do the troubles which have beset him ever since he took office as chairman of the State Liquor Authority.

Complaint has been made that a policeman should be selected to administer the liquor laws, although immediately after the appointment Gov. Lehman was highly praised for his choice. But if an officer of police was needed at that time, the situation in certain respects has changed very little indeed, and the requirements today are almost identical with those of the winter of 1933.

In his altogether too short tenure of office Mr. Mulrooney, we venture to say, has made a mark which will not be forgotten. His new appointment constitutes unquestionably an advancement, and he may welcome the opportunity to deal with real offenders in the place of the legion of would-be violators of the law, who have besieged him with requests for permission to evade it.

But the legitimate leaders of one of the truly great industries of the United States will regret with us his disappearance from the post he filled so well. And their sole hope today is that the Governor will choose in his place an equally fair and unbiased chairman of the State Board.